

South Hinksey Parish Council
Corporate Governance Questionnaire 2018-19: for completion
by the Council Chairman, not the Clerk / RFO

Area	Response (please provide detail below or on supplementary pages)
<p>Please confirm whether or not Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place.</p> <p>If so, when were they last updated and formally adopted by the Council?</p> <p>(Please provide an electronic copy of both.</p>	<p>Both Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place.</p> <p>They were re-adopted unamended by the Council at the 2018 Annual Council Meeting but the Financial Regulations were amended at the Council's December 2018 meeting.</p> <p>Both can be found on the website here: https://southhinksey.org/parish-council/governance/</p>
<p>Where original minutes are not provided for our examination, please confirm that each page of the master copy is signed or initialled by the Chairman at the subsequent meeting when they are approved.</p>	<p>Original minutes can be provided, if required, but pdf copies of the signed minutes of all meetings can be found on the website here: https://southhinksey.org/parish-council/minutes/</p>
<p>Please provide detail of the approved precept for 2018-19 and 2019-20, indicating whether any Support Grant is receivable in either year and the amount, including reference to the relevant approving minutes. Please note that the Support Grant should not be regarded as part of the precept in the AGAR Section 2.</p>	<p>The Council approved a precept of £14,350 for 2019-20, an increase of £350 on the precept for 2018-19 [minute ref 18/201]</p>
<p>Does the Council meet the criteria for adoption of the General Power of Competence and, if so, has it been adopted? Please confirm minute reference.</p> <p>If reliance is still placed on S.137,</p>	<p>The Council did not meet the criteria for adoption of the General Power of Competence in respect of 2018-19.</p> <p>The relevant powers are formally minuted for every payment by the Council, including Section 137 when</p>

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<p>etc, when considering the approval of grants and donations to local (and other) bodies, are the relevant powers considered and formally minuted?</p> <p>Where detail is only set out on an agenda paper, please provide an example.</p>	<p>used – which it was not in 2018-19</p>
<p>Please confirm that all internal and external audit reports are presented to and agreed by members, also with agreement on the actions to be taken to address any issues identified. Again, please provide detail of the relevant meeting and minute reference.</p>	<p>The Council accepted the internal audit report for 2017-18 [minute ref: 18/58].</p> <p>The Council implemented the report's one recommendation [minute ref: 18/176].</p> <p>The Council certified itself exempt from external audit for 2017-18 [minute ref 18/61].</p>
<p>Has the Council reviewed an updated version of the financial risk assessment and formally approved its re-adoption within the financial year (Governance and Accountability Manual – 2014 refers)? Please provide an electronic copy.</p>	<p>The Council last reviewed and amended the financial risk assessment at its December 2018 meeting [minute ref 18/176].</p> <p>A copy can be seen on the website here: https://shinksey.files.wordpress.com/2018/11/risk-assessment-december-2018.pdf</p>
<p>When approving payments for release, do those members signing cheques sign/initial individual invoices? Please provide a brief description of the approval process from receipt of invoice through to release of funds, on a separate sheet.</p>	<p>The two members signing cheques examine and initial individual invoices before signing the cheques and initialling the cheque stubs</p>

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Are <u>all individual</u> payments by direct debit, bankers' standing order or internet (if in use), similarly examined and approved for payment by members? Please provide detail of the controls in place over such payments, where different to those for cheque payments.	The only payment in 2018-19 not made by cheque was the annual payment to the Information Commissioner's Office, for which a direct debit arrangement was entered into in 2017-18 to take advantage of a discount for payment by direct debit
Does the Council/a nominated member review the detail of bank reconciliations routinely throughout the year and verify detail to underlying cashbooks and bank statements (Governance and Accountability Manual and model NALC Financial Regulations refer)?	Bank reconciliations were presented to and approved at the December 2018 and January 2019 Council meetings [minute ref: 18/176 and 18/201 respectively], but the detail had not been verified by an individual councillor
Please provide a brief description of the approach taken to the preparation and approval of the Annual Budget and Precept.	<p>The Clerk put a paper to the Council's November 2018 regarding the preparation of the 2019-20 budget and the Council agreed the recommendations it contained [minute ref 18/148].</p> <p>The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Clerk met on 23rd November and their recommendations and draft 2019-20 budget were first considered at the December 2018 meeting [minute ref 18/176].</p> <p>The Council approved an amended 2019-20 budget and set the precept for 2019-20 at its January 2019 meeting [minute ref 18/201].</p>
Does the Council formally consider and approve the level of reserves (General and Earmarked Funds) to	The draft 2019-20 budget presented to the Council's January 2019 meeting clearly referred to the level

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be carried forward to the next financial year? (Such consideration should be minuted formally).	<p>of reserves, as can be seen on the website here: https://shinksey.files.wordpress.com/2019/01/20190104-draft-budget.pdf</p> <p>The Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer will in future present the budget to the precept-setting meeting in the form expected in Governance and Accountability where the precept is a balancing figure taking into account any contribution to or from reserves.</p>
Has a physical examination / verification of the Councils stock of assets and agreement to Asset Register detail been undertaken recently? If so, when and by whom?	The Clerk and Councillor Goodhead are currently checking the detail of the Asset Register as part of the check on internal controls
Do members consider formally whether these assets should be included on the Council's insurance schedule or be regarded as "self-insured"?	Members do not formally consider whether individual items should be included on the insurance schedule
Are asset values based on purchase cost net of VAT (where known)? Where detail of the purchase cost is unknown, asset values should be reported on the Annual Return at the same value as the previous year, except where new assets are acquired or disposed of.	<p>Asset values are based on purchase cost net of VAT where known.</p> <p>Where the purchase cost is unknown, asset values are reported on the Annual Return at the same value as the previous year.</p>
Where total funds exceeding £100,000 are held, the Council is now (w.e.f. 1 4 2018) legally required to develop and adopt annually a formal Investment Policy /Strategy.	Not applicable

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<p>Please advise/confirm that the Council is complying with the requirements of the Transparency Code posting the required documentation on its website and also advise the name of the website, if not the straightforward Council's name.</p>	<p>The Council seeks to comply with the Transparency requirements and publishes everything it believes is required, although not in every single case by the required date.</p> <p>The Council uses a parish website (https://southhinksey.org/) originally established by the Friends of South Hinksey, an organisation has not functioned since 2008.</p> <p>That website is maintained by a volunteer, not by the Council, and is therefore affected by his other commitments.</p>

Certified by Chairman:



Date:

Friday 17th May 2019

Name in full:

Michael Cochrane